



**National Officers Academy**  
**Mock Exams for CSS-2026**  
**October 2025(Mock-4)**  
**GENERAL KNOWLEDGE-II**  
**(CURRENT AFFAIRS)**

<b>TIME ALLOWED: THREE HOURS</b> <b>PART-I(MCQS): MAXIMUM 30 MINUTES</b>	<b>PART-I (MCQS)</b> <b>PART-II</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MARKS = 20</b> <b>MAXIMUM MARKS = 80</b>
---	--	--

**NOTE:**

- i. **Part-II** is to be attempted on the separate **Answer Book**.
- ii. Attempt **ONLY FOUR** questions from **PART-II**. **ALL** questions carry **EQUAL** marks.
- iii. All the parts (if any) of each Question must be attempted at one place instead of at different places.
- iv. Write Q. No. in the Answer Book in accordance with Q. No. in the Q. Paper.
- v. No Page/Space be left blank between the answers. All the blank pages of Answer Book must be crossed.
- vi. Extra attempt of any question or any part of the question will not be considered.

**SUBJECTIVE PART — PART-II**

**Q. 2.** Pak-Afghan relations continue to remain tensed even after mediation by China. What do you think are major factors and how could it be improved.

**Q. 3.** The formation of new provinces is a recurring discourse in Pakistan. Critically evaluate the hurdles and give recommendations.

**Q. 4.** There is dangerous revival of militancy in KP and Baluchistan. Critically evaluate the reasons and give recommendations.

**Q. 5.** Trump once again pulled out of the Paris Climate Agreement. Critically evaluate the future efforts against climate change in the absence of the world leader.

**Q. 6.** How do you see the chances of the end of Ukrainian war when the demands of Russia and NATO are conflicting and poles apart? Elaborate.

**Q. 7.** How Pakistan could balance its relations after the recent engagement with US and strategic partnership with China.

**Q. 8.** Pakistan Saudi Arabia have signed a historic defense pact. Critically evaluate the causes and implications of the deal.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Best of Luck for CSS-2026***

## Question No: 03

day / date:

The formation of new provinces is a persistent and recurring discourse in Pakistan, driven deep by deep-seated grievances of people related to resources, distribution, ethnic identity, and perceived centralization of power. The critical evaluation of significant hurdles facing this process and suggest various recommendations aimed at resolving the underlying structural issues given below.

### Critical Evaluation Of Hurdles To New Province Formation

The major challenges of creation of new provinces stem from historical experiences, internal political dynamics, and the risk of further national fragmentation.

#### 1) Risk Of Exacerbating Ethnic Conflict:

The history of Pakistan demonstrates that failing to manage ethnic diversity and regional grievances can lead to severe consequences, notably the state's dismemberment in 1971, influenced by perceived ethnic discrimination against Bengalis.

#### ~~② Creating New Provinces~~

Creating new provinces against linguistic lines is historically controversial. New divisions risk spurring new ethnic tensions even within the newly created boundaries, as many provinces (Sindh and Balochistan) are multi-ethnic.

For example, calls for partitioning of Balochistan along ethnic lines by Pakhtuns dominated there have already led to small-scale violence.

Official nationalism historically attempted to suppress regional identities, viewing them as threats to state's integrity.

## 2) Increased Competition for Scarce Resources:

The demand for new provinces often originated from issue of distributive justice and competition for scarce resources.

Adding more administrative units may simply multiply the existing points of conflict and endless negotiation.

Disagreements between provinces can significantly contribute to sluggish pace of national development, often stymying crucial infrastructure projects, such as Kalabagh Dam or Thar coal development.

## 3) Entrenched Governance Dysfunctions:

Introducing new provincial units risks embedding and exacerbating Pakistan's existing dysfunctional political structure.

Pakistan's political system is often characterized by patronage-dominated and clientelist politics, where parties function as loose confederation of kinship ('biradari') groups competing for power and resources.

Creating new provinces could merely

provide new arenas for these entrenched dynamics, potentially without fundamentally altering the political culture or improving governance and accountability.

The core problem

lies in the poor management of public finances and deep-seated, unresolved structural issues exacerbated by bad management and poor governance.

#### 4) Legacy And Central Dominance And Structural Imbalance:

The demand for new units (such as separate province for Siraiki-speaking inhabitants in southern Punjab or the Hazara province demand in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) stems from the persistent issue of an "overbearing Centre" supremacy".

Historically, this centralization, structural imbalances, and military authoritarianism have been at odds with regional politics, leading to chronic centre-province tensions. This magnitude of resentment, particularly among smaller provinces as their power is often perceived to be dominated by Punjab.

#### Recommendations To Resolve Provincial And Autonomy Demands

##### A) Strengthen Financial And Resource Federalism:

###### 1) Equitable Resource Allocation:

Sustain and replicate successful pragmatic compromises, such as National Finance Award (NFC), which rebalanced revenue distribution in favor of poorer and less populous provinces.

## 2) Deepen Fiscal Devolution:

Establish Provincial Finance Commissions to further divide financial resources among provincial and district governments, ensuring that benefit reach the grassroot levels.

## 3) Fair Distribution Of Project Benefits:

Ensure that resource development and infrastructure projects, such as Gwadar Port, are perceived to benefit the local populations (like the ethnic Baloch) to address long-standing grievances over resource exploitation.

## B) Uphold Enhance Political Autonomy And Local Governance

### 1) Uphold Devolution:

Fully implement the spirit of constitutional changes like the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which devolved significant authority to the provinces and was a necessary step for a diverse country.

### 2) Strengthen Local Government:

Foster genuinely well-functioning local governments (union, sub-district and district levels) to enhance local participation and improve service delivery. This is crucial for strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring transparency closer to the people.

### C) Improving Governance And Address Political Dysfunctions:

#### 1) Break the Elite Capture:

Address the monopoly of economic and political power amassed by a small class of elites (politicians, businessman, military, landowners) which hinders equitable resource distribution.

#### 2) Institutionalize Democracy:

Establish stable and effective political institutions by creating "formal and informal" "institutions of restraint" (checks and balances). This includes strengthening of rule of law and ensuring respect for dissent and minority rights.

#### 3) Cultivate Visionary Leadership:

Seek credible leadership with political will and a clear vision to pursue long-term goals and reforms, rather than being focused on short-term patronage or electoral cycles.

## Question No: 04

day / date:

The dangerous revival of militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan represents a convergence of deep-seated internal structural failures and persistent regional geopolitical instability. Critically evaluating the reasons for this phenomenon and outlining necessary recommendations requires addressing both the most immediate security vacuum and the underlying political and economic grievances, drawing extensively on Pakistan's history of conflict and governance challenges.

### Critical Evaluation Of Reasons Of Militancy Revival:

The resurgence of militancy in these regions stems from distinct local issues exacerbated by enduring national policy failures and external blowback.

#### A - Policy Failures And Geopolitical Blowback

##### 1) Legacy Of Afghan Conflict And Blowback: (Affecting KP and Balochistan)

The internal threat from violent extremists and militant groups, particularly the (TTP) Tehrik-i-Taliban is a direct consequence of the fallout from the Afghan war. Pakistan's involvement in the anti-Soviet Jihad (1980s) created the fundamental groundwork, leading to the induction of Islamic militancy, weapons proliferation, and the spread of narcotics.

##### 2) Post 9/11 War Spillover (KP):

The US invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11 and Pakistan's subsequent policy shift pushed the war into Pakistan's border regions, fueling militant forces. The TTP, closely linked to the Afghan Taliban, emerged and declared war on Pakistani security institutions for aligning with US. The porous, rugged border with Afghanistan remains difficult to manage, enabling cross border movement of Pashto-speaking militants.

### 3) State Sponsored Proxies And Strategic Confusion:

#

Historically, Pakistan pursued a "longstanding state policy of using religiously motivated proxies" for strategic gains against India in Kashmir and Afghanistan. This approach resulted in "lethal blowback" where groups once considered strategic assets now target the Pakistani state. The instrumentalist use of Islam has "eroded the state's basis" and created divisiveness.

### 4) Governance Deficit And Socio-economic Roots:

Militancy thrives by exploiting local grievances and governance failures. The widespread lack of accountability, inequitable resource distribution and the failure to provide development needs like education and healthcare creates a breeding ground for discontent. Furthermore, an increasing youth bulge with unfulfilled expectation is susceptible to radicalization.

### B) Region-Specific Grievances

## 1) Balochistan's Resource and Identity Conflict:

Distribution in Balochistan are rooted in grievances over resource exploitation and identity. Baloch nationalists complain that Punjabi-dominated Central government is "milking and exploiting" their resources like Siw-Gas, without commensurate benefit to the local ethnic population.

## 2) External Interference in Balochistan

Pakistan views India's growing influence in Afghanistan including its alleged use of Afghan territory and intelligence services, as an effort to support subversion and the Baloch insurgency. Pakistan perceives India as seeking to encircle it which aggravates strategic dilemmas.

## 3) Cross Border Sanctuaries:

The presence of the Afghan Taliban leadership in (Quetta Shura) in the Pathan areas of Balochistan and the operation of Iranian Baloch rebel groups (Jundallah) near the border complicates internal security management and labor border control.

## Recommendations to Neutralize

### A) Systematic Governance And Economic Reforms.

1) Improve Governance Quality: Governance is central to moving Pakistan beyond the "crisis state". This requires strengthening the rule of law, enhancing institutional capacity and ensuring genuine accountability.

## 2) Deepen Resource Justice (Balochistan)

A credible effort is needed to address legitimate Baloch grievances through political accommodation. It is crucial to ensure that ethnic Baloch benefit directly from projects like Gwadar and resource development to heal this "festered sore".

## 3) Invest In Socioeconomic Uplift:

Prioritize high quality, value neutral education to challenge radicalization and cultivate critical thinking. Job creation is essential to absorb the young population and prevent discontent from turning into the radicalization.

## 4) Rebalance Civil-Military Relations

For the state to mature and survive, the army needs "to take a back seat" and allow civilian institutions to survive and function unfettered. A stable political system and civilian supremacy are essential for making credible, long-term reforms possible.

## B) Strategic And Ideological Re-calibration

## ① Evolve A Counter Narrative:

day / date:

military force alone is insufficient. Pakistan needs to develop an ideological defense and "new and progressive Islamic narrative" to counter extremist interpretations. The state must delegitimize the use of "Jihad" that was previously sanctioned for strategic reasons, as this has confused the national narrative.

## ② Review Asymmetric Strategies:

Pakistan must explicitly denounce terrorism against civilians and break all links with groups that resort to terrorism. This is crucial for internal stability, international image, and securing policy independence.

## ③ Stabilize Afghanistan:

Pakistan must pursue its own plan for peace in Afghanistan through an inclusive political settlement. While navigating external pressures, Pakistan must manage its strategic interests in Afghanistan transparently to avoid being seen as supporting insurgents.

## ④ Strengthen External Security Capacity:

While military operations like (those in Swat) have achieved tactical success, these gains must be buttressed by non-military measures, including political, judicial and development interventions to address the root causes of militancy.

## Question No: 05

day / date:

The US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, announced by Trump administration, critically undermines global efforts for against climate change, primarily due to the magnitude of the US economy and its historical role in international affairs. Future efforts must navigate the resultant leadership vacuum, the inherent structural limitations of the Paris framework, and deep economic conflicts of interests.

### Critical Evaluation Of the Absence (Hegemonic Vacuum)

The absence of the US, historically described as a hegemon, presents major strategic and functional challenges to global climate efforts.

#### 1) Erosion Of International Cooperation:

The withdrawal, often framed as part of the Trump administration's broader hostility towards international institutions, is detrimental, as it <sup>is</sup> hardly helps the overall effectiveness of international organizations in addressing climate change.

#### 2) Diminish Prospects for Regimes:

The US is responsible for a large share of historical pollution and was a significant cost contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The lack of commitment from the American hegemon significantly dims prospects for strengthening environmental preservation regimes.

### 3) Financial Instability:

The withdrawal of a major contributor can lead to significant financial trouble for international organizations dedicated to climate change efforts.

### 4) Policy Instability:

The US stance on global environmental cooperation often depends on whether the President is a Democrat or Republican fostering an environment of political instability that jeopardizes long-term international agreements.

## Challenges To Future Global Efforts

In the absence of clear global leadership, the pursuit of collective climate action faces intrinsic hurdles rooted in the structural international agreements and economic reality.

### ① Inadequate Voluntary Commitments:

The Paris Agreement relies on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). However, the sources existing reduction commitments under this framework are insignificant to slow down or stop global climate change.

### ② Lack Of Enforcement:

The agreement structurally lacks an enforcement mechanism for states that fail to meet their NDCs. Compliance depends largely on commitment and scrutiny.

### 3) Conflict of Economic Interests:

Effective global solutions are fundamentally hindered by the conflict between economic interests of major states and ecological needs. The influence of expert knowledge tends to be limited when it runs counter to these powerful economic interests. Addressing climate change requires curbing economic growth and shifting technological paths, which is extremely expensive.

### 4) Security Threat Magnification:

Climate change poses grave dangers globally, potentially causing violent conflicts, mass migration and undermining food supplies. For states like Pakistan, long-term ecological degradation, such as water shortages, poses a danger that could render governance unworkable.

## Alternative Drivers Of Climate Action

Despite the vacuum, some momentum and potential leadership remain outside the traditional US-hegemonic structure.

### 1) Emergence Of Other Major Powers:

The US is not the only power influencing the policy; China, the biggest contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by tonne (as of 2024), showed that leadership alongside the US in forging the Paris Agreement. China, India and Brazil have increasingly asserted their collective interests in negotiations.

## 2) Policy And Technology Solutions:

The international community, including bodies like the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the IPCC, continues to provide necessary structures and scientific consensus. Policy recommendations emphasize carbon pricing, technology policy and energy efficiency to manage climate risk.

## 3) Reframing As A Security Issue:

Climate change is increasingly being reframed as a security threat, which has the potential to compel states to take more drastic measures and cooperate on risk management.

In conclusion, the withdrawal of the US from Paris Agreement significantly amplifies the challenge of coordinating global action, reinforcing the need for systematic cooperation against a rapidly accelerating global crisis. The future of climate rests heavily on whether the other major powers and international institutions can overcome fundamental conflicts of interests and the structural weakness of voluntary agreements.

## Question No: 07

day / date:

Pakistan's challenge in balancing its strategic partnership with China and its necessary engagement with the US hinges on pursuing internal stability, defining its core national interests independently, and meticulously calibrating its relationship with both global powers.

Pakistan's foreign and defense policies must ultimately reflect its economic aspirations and address its long-standing security dilemmas, primarily concerning India.

Here is a proposed framework how Pakistan could balance its relations:

### A) Laying The Internal Foundation for External Balance

For Pakistan to navigate external pressures successfully, it must first stabilize internally. The inability to establish effective political institutions and manage governance issues is a major shortcoming.

#### 1) Prioritize Governance And Economic Cohesion:

a) Tackle Intertwined Problems: Address security, economy and governance issue simultaneously as they are deeply intertwined.

b) Uphold Stability And Growth: Uphold social cohesion, government stability and growth, which are crucial for maintaining strategic balance.

c) Align Policy: Develop a clear and comprehensive national plan that aligns with social, economic, transport infrastructure, energy and communications policies with defense and foreign policies.

d) Strengthen Institutions: Strengthen substantive components of democracy, such as the rule of law and respect for dissent, as Pakistan's inability to establish stable political institutions is a major shortcoming.

## 2) Revising the National Security Paradigm

a) Reclaim Destiny: Revise the premise of the national security paradigm that has eroded the state's basis and derailed democratic attempts.

b) Focus Inward: Promote national cohesion and address internal divisions, as internal instability is the most significant long-term threat. Internal strength and stability are paramount for survival.

c) Educate Citizenship: Use high quality, value-neutral education to enable informed debate on crucial policy matters, helping to square foreign and defense policies with internal stability requirements.

## B) Calibrating Relations with United States:

Pakistan's relations with US is historically strained by differing strategic objectives - Pakistan focusing

on India, the US on global superpower competition - and the perception of a US tilt towards India.

## 1) Build Balanced Relations:

a) **Mutual Interests And Sovereignty:** Work to build balanced and stable relations with US based on mutual interests and respect for sovereignty.

b) **Leverage Critical Role:** Leverage Pakistan's critical role, albeit partial, ally status in counter-terrorism against groups like Al-Qaeda and TTP. The US views Pakistan's survival as vital interests.

c) **Mitigate Exploitation:** Seek to achieve strategic accommodation with US to maintain strategic capabilities and policy independence. Pakistan's economic vulnerability has historically been leveraged by the US (via institutions like IMF/World Bank) to extract strategic concessions.

## 2) Manage Strategic Differences:

a) **Address Security Anxiety:** The US must calibrate the dangers of treating Pakistan's India-centric strategic concerns with nonchalance, as the growing Indo-US partnership aggravates Pakistan's security dilemmas.

b) **Discrimination:** Address the perceived discrimination such as US offering nuclear deals and advanced equipment to India while imposing restrictions on Pakistan, which heightens strategic anxiety.

## c) Deepening The Strategic Partnership With China

China is Pakistan's "principle geo-political partner" and key external balancer against India and the growing Indo-US strategic relationship.

### 1) Leverage Economic Corridor (CPEC Egrv)

a) **Economic Objectives:** Expand strategic and economic relations with China, which offers Pakistan the "best hope" for realizing its security and economic objectives.

b) **Connectivity:** Focus on utilizing infrastructure projects such as the Gwadar Port and the highway networks linking Central Asia and China to the Arabia Sea, as they represent an important long-term growth opportunity.

### 2) Maintain Geopolitical Utility:

a) **External Balancing:** Continue to rely on China for strategic cooperation and balancing power against India.

b) **Manage Nause:** Recognizing that China's perspective on South Asia has become more balanced due to its exponential economic relationship with India, and Pakistan needs a new plan to revive and invigorate this strategic relationship, focusing on Beijing rather than Washington's whims.

c) **Avoid Rivalry:** Crucially, Pakistan must avoid becoming the focus of Sino-US struggle for

control as this would increase destabilization.

## D) Regional Balancing And Security

Effective balancing requires managing regional threats and diversifying critical relationships.

### 1) Deterrence And India:

a) **Minimum Credible Deterrence:** Maintain a minimum credible deterrence of nuclear as an instrument for national survival and to counter India's conventional advantage.

b) **Reduce Burden:** Achieve strategic balance with India and seek reduction of resolution of unresolved issue like Kashmir to reduce the overwhelming security burden diverting resources from development.

### 2) Strengthen Islamic And Regional Ties

a) **Revive Ties:** Revive relations with key Islamic nations including Saudi Arabia and Iran.

b) **Iran Engagement:** Strengthen convergent interests with Iran (e.g. Peace in Afghanistan, gas pipelines) while addressing existing problems like suspicion that serves as a US proxy.

c) **Saudi Relationship:** Build a more balanced relationship with Saudi Arabia based on mutual

day / date:

interests and reciprocal support, moving away from a growing reliance on Saudi financial alone.

d) **Afghanistan Stability:** Work towards the stabilization of Afghanistan, as a peaceful post-American Afghanistan is critical for Pakistan's security and for opening trade/transit facilities with Central Asian Republics.